

chron

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON

HK

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY

May 1, 1970

MEMORANDUM FOR HENRY A. KISSINGER

FROM: W. R. Smyser

SUBJECT: Actions Against North Vietnam

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

In reply to your question this morning, I think it would not be a bad time to launch some operations against the North. Our operations should be based on the following three principles:

-- they should indicate to Hanoi that we would not feel restrained if they provoke us by violating the 1968 "understanding," and that their escalatory actions in Cambodia and Laos also will elicit a response.

-- they should be related primarily to North Vietnamese operations in Laos and Cambodia.

-- they should not give Hanoi the impression that we are reacting to things it has not done, and which it might as well now do.

With this in mind, the best targets would be the NVN-Laos routes and passes between the DMZ and Mu Gia. Some of those routes and passes, particularly near the DMZ, have been improved recently. Strikes on those routes would convey the message that we will react to any stepped-up infiltration and would also be tied to such recent actions as the attack on Attapeu and the move of units around the DMZ into I Corps.

Let me emphasize that I consider such bombings secondary to the importance of moving quickly and strongly against the sanctuaries, with all the strength we can possibly muster. The sooner and the more overwhelmingly that is done, the better. There are other sanctuaries than those we are hitting, and we should go after them. Moreover, it has been our experience in South Vietnam that sanctuaries do not go away after one operation. They have to be subjected to repeated drives, and it is best for political and military reasons that those should be conducted as quickly as possible.

TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY